

Gauge conversion in Tamil Nadu

557. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the broad gauge conversion process in Tamil Nadu was neglected and the pace of progress in case of works taken up was dead slow; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that there has been a huge regional imbalance between Tamil Nadu and other States in taking up and executing the broad gauge conversion in as much as there has been a huge imbalance of broad gauge conversion works still in Tamil Nadu?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

Freight loading of coal and iron ore

558. SHRI SUREDRA LATH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how much freight loading was made of coal and iron ore in last three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that wagons/rakes are not available to cater the increasing demand; and

(c) what action is being taken or contemplated by his Ministry to meet the increased demand for loading for transportation of iron ore and coal in Orissa?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The details is as under:—

	(In million tonnes)	
	(Revenue earning coal)	Iron Ore
2003-04	251.75	81.42
2004-05	271.40	92.33
2005-06	294.25	108.44

(b) No Sir. There are however, temporary shortfalls, specially with respect to newly commissioned smaller sponge iron plants and iron ore for export.

(c) Railways are taking up works to remove the infrastructural constraints, wherever they are, to meet the increased demand for transportation of coal and iron ore in the country including Orissa.

Railways time table

559. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued new railway timetable from 1 July, 2006 for only about 5 months instead of one year as per earlier practice;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the people have to purchase it twice in a year to know the timetable;

(d) if so, how can poor people purchase it twice in a year; and

(e) the steps being taken by Government to revert to the earlier practice of issuing timetable for one year to protect the poor person's interest in purchasing railway timetable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. In pursuance of the announcement in the Railway Budget 2006-2007, Indian Railways had initiated action to review the All India Time Table de-novo. Consequently, in the first phase, the timings of a large number of trains have been made convenient and 140 trains have also been made superfast. These changes were reflected in the July-November, 2006 edition of time table. Since the Second phase of the exercise for further reviewing the Time Table was going on, (which has since been completed) time table valid for one full year would have been rendered useless due to large scale changes taking place in the second